

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01 TRSE-00 ACDA-12 HA-05 /103 W
-----107161 240745Z /17

R 231635Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY CAPE TOWN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7004
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAPE TOWN 588

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDEV, SF, WA
SUBJECT: NAMIBIA: REMARKS BY PIK BOTHA'S ASSISTANT

REF: CAPE TOWN 527,

1. EMBOFF AND BRITISH EMBASSY MINISTER SUMMERHAYES HAD LUNCH AGAIN MARCH 22 WITH NEIL VAN HEERDEN, ASSISTANT TO FOREIGN MINISTER PIK BOTHA. VAN HEERDEN SAID THAT THE FOREIGN MINISTER WAS IN PRETORIA WHERE AMONG OTHER THINGS HE WAS CONSULTING WITH COLLEAGUES ON THE SECURITY ISSUES IN THE NEGOTIATIONS. ACCORDING TO VAN HEERDEN, THE QUESTION OF CILIANIZATION OF SUPPORT TROOPS FOR THE RESIDUAL FORCE WAS STILL A VERY STICKY ONE. HE DID
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NOT BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THAT THE IDEA HAD YET BEEN REJECTED. ON THE SUBSTITUTION OF ARMY PLATOONS IN THE NORTHERN BASES WITH POLICE UNITS, VAN HEERDEN SAID THAT HE HAD FLOATED THIS IDEA UP HIGHER AND THAT THERE WAS SOME INTEREST IN IT.

2. VAN HEERDEN ASKED ABOUT THE NEXT STEPS IN THE PROCESS AND AGAIN EXPRESSED HIS CONCERN THAT SOUTH

AFRICA HAD NOT YET PROVIDED ALL OF ITS EXPECTED RESPONSES TO THE CLARIFICATIONS PRESENTED ON MARCH 5. HE ASKED IF WE WERE EXPECTING FURTHER REACTION FROM THE SAG BEFORE PROCEEDING WITH THE FINAL PROPOSAL. HE WAS TOLD THAT ADDITIONAL SOUTH AFRICAN COMMENTS HAD BEEN EXPECTED BUT SINCE THESE HAD NOT BEEN FORTHCOMING, IT WAS LIKELY THAT THE CONTACT GROUP WOULD PROCEED.

3. WHEN ASKED ABOUT THE STATUS OF THE ADMINISTRATOR GENERAL'S SOUNDING OF OPINION AMONG POLITICAL AND COMMUNITY LEADERS ON THE WESTERN PROPOSAL, VAN HEERDEN SAID THE PROCESS WAS STILL CONTINUING. HE EMPHASIZED THE PIVOTAL ROLE OF THE CHURCH LEADERS, ASSERTING THAT THEY WOULD DETERMINE THE OUTCOME OF ANY ELECTION. HE CONCEDED THAT THE MAJOR CHURCH LEADERS WERE GENERALLY IN FAVOR OF THE WESTERN PROPOSAL BUT THEY WERE CONCERNED THAT NO ADVANTAGE BE GIVEN TO SWAPO. THE CHURCH LEADERS, HE SAID, WERE BECOMING INCREASINGLY OPPOSED TO SWAPO.

4. VAN HEERDEN NOTED THAT THE RHODESIAN SITUATION HAD NOT HELPED IN GAINING ACCEPTANCE OF THE NAMIBIAN PROPOSAL IN SOUTH AFRICA. MOST PEOPLE, HE SAID, TOOK THE SHORT RANGE VIEW AND SAW SMITH AS HAVING ACHIEVED SUCCESS; THEY DID NOT LOOK TO THE LONG TERM DANGERS AND UNCERTAINTIES IN THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT. CONFIDENTIAL

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5. COMMENT: VAN HEERDEN SEEMED SOMEWHAT LESS PESSIMISTIC ABOUT THE SUCCESS OF THE WESTERN PROPOSAL THAN HE HAD LAST WEEK. THIS MAY STEM FROM THE FACT THAT VAN ZIJL AND DU PLESSIS REPORTEDLY FAILED TO GAIN THE PRIME MINISTER'S ACCEPTANCE OF A RETURN TO THE ORIGINAL TURNHALLE IDEA OF AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT (REPORTED SEPTTEL). BOWDLER

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